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LD 1159

Distinguished Members of the Health and Human Services committee, my name is Roxy Kai from Woodstock, Maine. I am a volunteer leader with Maine People's Alliance and I am testifying in support of LD1159.

Maine needs harm reduction. People worry that providing sites like this will only increase or encourage drug use, but that's simply not a fact! Harm Reduction sites have been proven to save lives. The truth is harmful drugs are here. They've been here, and they will continue to come here. It is near to impossible to stop people from bringing them up to Maine or stop people from using them. At the very least most of us can agree that nothing will stop a person from using drugs unless they themselves get to a point they want to stop and get help for themselves. No amount of fear of incarceration, or fear of potential consequences stops people. We can't control the substance, but a large part of the danger comes from taking it alone, or taking it with dirty supplies.

That is something we can aid in. Clean supplies reduce the risk of bloodborne pathogens and infections, having a safe place to go gives someone a chance at life if they overdose because someone can immediately administer naloxone and safely call ambulatory services.

I have been in this scene, I know the fear first hand. I know what it means to love someone and watch them suffer from addiction, and to try and try to get them help. I had to learn through experience how to shift my mindset about drugs and addiction, and how to respond to someone who is using, and how to love them through it. We need to shift our goal. We need a new focus. As fatalistic as it may seem, it's impossible to stop drugs from coming into Maine and to stop those with addiction disease from using them if they're not ready to. We need to stop focusing on fear based control tactics that don't work, and put the effort and shift the focus into having a cleaner and safer environment for all and investing in a proven method to save lives. Make saving Mainers your goal. Vote ought to pass on LD1159.

Thank you for your time.

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